

in things religious he was by no means lacking in his allegiance as a subject. There is the same ring of sincerity in his protestation to the regent herself. " For God I tak to record that in this action I have nether socht and nether yitt seekis any uther thing than God's glorie to encrease and the liberties of this poure realm to be mentenit." Such asseverations are common enough on the lips of the scheming politicians of the age. But Lord James at this period had more reason to look for personal advancement to the favour of his sister than to the struggling cause of the reformers, and in any case it is a narrow judgment that would gauge the Scottish Reformation merely from the conduct of its leaders. This is the tactic of a certain school of writers, whose idea of the Reformation seems to be that it was a movement engineered by a set of hypocrites or swindlers, and who seek to depreciate it by ridiculing men like Knox, and "showing up" in the smart style of the superior critic men like Lord James and Erskine. Such critics have no conception of the grim and passionate reaction against the ecclesiastical abuses and abominations that disgusted and angered the better spirits of the age, and roused a whirlwind of popular fury against the hypocrite and the oppressor in priestly garb. To a certain extent it was a baronial or aristocratic movement, and it is easy to pick holes in it. But this is not the whole or even the distinctive aspect of the case. There was a popular inspiration, a moral and spiritual force, that played a mighty part in the drama, even though it may not bulk on the stage on which the plotters and the potentates occupy so large a place. The diplomatists who intrigued and counter-intrigued doubtless did their share of the performance. But the real history of the movement does not lie in the documents which they have left us in such voluminous quantity. Minus the element of soul-searching conviction, which sought expression in passionate and, at times, blind violence, the age would never have become an epoch. He who does not see in this drama the throes of the birth of a new age does not understand it. This element of conviction and aspiration welling up in masses of men, like the billows lashed by the sudden tempest, is to us unmistakable. It might be wanting south of the Border, where the Reformation was largely forged in the royal